The Book of Eemaan

By:

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Tahqeeq:

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Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Table of Contents

Biography of the Author

He is Abu Ubaid al-Qaasim bin Sallaam al-Baghdaadee, the Imaam, the Mujtahid, the Ocean of knowledge, the Linguist and the Legal Jurist.

He was born in Harraa in about the year 158 and his father was a Roman slave to some of the people of Harraa.

He heard (learnt) from a group of the trustworthy Imaams, like Sufyaan bin Uyaynah, Ismaa'eel bin Ulayyah, Yazeed bin Haaroon, Yahya bin Sa'eed al-Qattaan, Abd ar-Rahmaan bin Mahdee, Hammaad bin Salma and others.

Imaam ad-Daarimee, Abu Bakr bin Abee ad-Dunya, Alee bin Abd al-Azeez al-Baghawee, Muhammad bin Yahya al-Marwazee and others narrate from him.

Imaam Ishaaq bin Raahawayyah said: Allaah loves the truth, Abu Ubaid is more knowledgeable and has deeper understanding then me.

He also said: we are dependant upon Abu Ubaid, and Abu Ubaid is not dependant upon us.

Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal said: Abu Ubaid is a teacher (*Ustaadh*) and every day he increases in good.

And Yahya bin Ma'een was asked about him to which he replied that people should ask Abu Ubaid about him!

Abu Daawood said: trustworthy, reliable.

Al-Haafidh adh-Dhahabee said: whosoever looks into the books of Abu Ubaid will know his high rank in memorisation and knowledge, he was a haafidh of hadeeth and it's defects. Knowledgeable of fiqh and the difference of opinions, a pillar in the Language, an Imaam in recitation and he had books concerning them. I have come across his books, 'Kitaab al-Amwaal' and 'Kitaab an-Naasikh wal Mansookh'.

Al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee said: he was possessing nobility, religion, excellent manners, a good madhab and excellent books sought after in every land. And the narrators from him are famous and trustworthy. Deserving of mention and excellence, and his book concerning 'al-Amwaal' is one of the best books written on fiqh.

I say: despite these virtues and excellent qualities the Six Imaams (of the famous six books on hadeeth) did not report any of his hadeeth, and this is from the many evidences that they reported from only some of the trustworthy narrators of hadeeth. So there is nothing strange, after knowing this that Imaam Bukhaaree did not narrate from some of the trustworthy narrators from the Ahlul Bait may Allaah be pleased with them.

From the words of Abu Ubaid, may Allaah have mercy upon him, are: the follower of the Sunnah is like one holding onto hot stones, and in this day he is more excellent in my eyes then the one who raises the sword in the Way of Allaah.

I say: this was in his time, so what would be said about our times?

He, may Allaah have mercy upon him, stayed in Baghdaad for a time, then he became the Qaadee in Turtoos, then after that he moved to Mecca and he lived there until he died in the year 224.

Chapter 1: the Characteristics of faith concerning it's completion and it's levels

Indeed have you asked me about faith, and the difference of the nation concerning it's completion and it's increasing and decreasing, and you mentioned that you would like to know the position of Ahlus Sunnah with regards to this, and the proof of those who differ from them on this. So indeed, may Allaah have mercy upon you, know that this subject was discussed by the Salaf at the beginning of this ummah and by those that followed them (taabi`een) and those who followed them till this day of ours. I have written to you a short explanation of what I know concerning this.

Know, may Allaah have mercy upon you, that the People of Knowledge and Concern for the religion have split into two groups over this issue.

One of them says: Faith is sincerity in the heart to Allaah, and testimony of the tongue, and action of the limbs.

The other says: Rather faith is in the heart and upon the tongue, and as for actions then they are from *taqwaa* (God-consciousness) and *birr* (piety) and are not included in faith.

And we looked into the difference of opinion of these two groups, and we found that the Book and the Sunnah affirmed the truth of the group that made Faith intention, saying and action together, and negated the opinion of the other group.

And the basis of this, which is our proof, is following what the Qur`aan has spoken of, for indeed Allaah has said in the unequivocal verse of His Book,

"So if you differ amongst yourselves on anything then refer it back to Allaah and the Messenger if you believe in Allaah and the Last Day, that is better and more suitable for final determination." (4:59)

We referred the matter to that which Allaah sent His Messenger (SAW) with and revealed in His Book. So we found that He made the commencement of faith to be the testimony that none has the right to be worshipped except for Allaah and that Muhammad is His Messenger (SAW). And the Prophet (SAW) remained in Mecca after his Prophethood for ten years or ten odd years calling to this testification only, and at that time nothing else was prescribed to be part of faith, so the one who responded to this call was a believer and it was not necessary to call him anything else but a believer, and *zakaah* or fasting or the other regulations of the religion were not obligatory upon him. The scholars have explained this by saying that this leniency at that time was a Mercy and Kindness from Allaah to His Servants, because they had just come out of the *Jaahiliyyah* and it's harshness and had He charged them with all of the obligations then their hearts would have become averse to the revelation and their bodies would have felt burdened. So He made the faith that was obligatory upon them at that time affirmation with the tongues only, and this is what made them to be believers during the whole of the Meccan period and ten odd months in Madeenah after the *Hijrah*.

Then, when the people had returned to Islaam and their desire for it became good and proper, Allaah increased for them in their faith that they change the prayer direction to the Ka'bah after they had been praying to Bail al-Maqdis, saying,

"Verily We have seen the turning of your face towards the heaven. Surely, We shall give you a Qiblah that you are pleased with, so turn your face in the direction of the Holy Mosque. And wheresoever you people are, turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction." [2:144].

Then He addressed them, when they were in Madeenah, by the appellation of faith that had previously been given them whenever He ordered them with something or forbade them from something. So He said, while commanding,

"O you who believe! Bow and prostrate" [22:77],

"O you who believe! When you intend to offer prayer, wash your faces, and your arms upto the elbows." [5:6].

He said, while prohibiting**,**

"O you who believe! Do not devour usury doubled and multiplied." [3:130].

"O you who believe! Kill not game while you are in a state of ihraam" [5:95].

So in every address that was directed to them after the *hijrah* containing a command or prohibition, He named them with this name (believers) due to their affirming the *shahaadah* alone - since at that time nothing else had been made obligatory for them. But afterwards, when the religious laws were revealed, these were made obligatory upon them in exactly the same way as the first obligation (of testifying to the *shahaadah*) was, this because they were all from Allaah (sent) by His Command and Obligation. So if they had refused to turn to the direction of the Ka`bah in their prayer and stuck to that faith [they had in the beginning of Islaam] whose appellation they were ascribed to, and they had stuck to the *qiblah* that they used to pray towards, then this would not have helped them at all, and they would have violated their affirmation of the shahaadah. This because the first obedience was not more deserving of the appellation of 'faith' then the second, so therefore when they responded to Allaah and His Messenger and accepted the (obligation of) prayer just as they had responded by affirming (the *shahaadah*) then all of this would now be included in the appellation 'faith' - due to the prayer being added to the affirmation.

And the proof that the prayer is a part of faith is the saying of Allaah, Azza wa Jall,

"And Allaah would never make your faith to be lost. Truly Allaah is full of Kindness, the Most Merciful towards mankind" [2:143].

This verse was revealed concerning some of the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) who turned towards the *Qiblah* while they were praying in the direction of *Bait al-Maqdis*, so the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) was asked about this and then this verse was revealed[1] So what proof is needed after this to show that prayer is part of faith?

So they remained like this for a period of time and when they started going to prayer eagerly and their hearts found it easy, Allaah revealed the obligation of *zakaah* in their faith in addition to what had preceded, saying,

"Establish the prayer, and give the *zakaah*" [2:83, 110].

"Take *sadaqah* from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it." [9:103]. [2]

So if they affirmed the *shahaadah* with their tongues and established the prayers but they refused to give the *zakaah* then this would have effaced all that came before this obligation and would have violated their affirmation (of the *shahaadah*) that had preceded just as their aversion to the prayer would have violated their affirmation that preceded. And the testifier to the truth of this was the Jihaad that Abu Bakr fought alongwith the Muhaajiroon and the Ansaar against those Arabs that refused to pay the *zakaah*, just as the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) made Jihaad against the People of Shirk. There is no difference between these two Jihaads with regards to shedding blood, taking children as captives, and taking the spoils of war. And all the Arabs did was to refuse to give *zakaah*, not reject its institution.

Then all of the laws of Islaam became like this, each time a law was revealed it became joined to the laws that had preceded, and all of them were included under the appellation of 'faith', and those who followed them were named believers.

This is the place in which those who held that faith was merely saying erred that when they heard Allaah calling them believers they attributed complete faith to them. And likewise they erred in their explanation of the hadeeth of the Prophet (SAW) when he was asked as to what faith was to which he replied, *"that you believe in Allaah ...."*[3] And

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[1] Narrated by Bukhaaree from the hadeeth of Baraa`a. And by at-Tirmidhee from the hadeeth of ibn Abbaas and he authenticated it.

[2] I say: there are a number of Meccan verses which mention zakaah, sometimes enjoining it, sometimes praising the one who gives it, and sometimes condemning the one who leaves it. So in *Surah Muzzammil*, **"establish the prayer and give the zakaah"** [73:20], and in *Surahs Naml* and *Luqmaan*, **"Those who establish the prayers and give zakaah and believe with certainty in the Hereafter."** [27:3, 31:4]. And in surah Fussilaat, **"And woe to the polytheists, those who do not give the zakaah, and they are disbelievers in the Hereafter,"** [41:6-7].
It is obvious that the meaning of *zakaah* in these verses is obligatory *sadaqah* without a set limit, and in Madeenah the limits were set. Allaah knows best.

[3] Indicating the hadeeth of Jibraa'eel reported in the Two Saheehs from the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah, and reported by Muslim from the hadeeth of ibn Umar. See hadeeth no.119 in 'Kitaab al-Eemaan' of ibn Abee Shaybah.

their explanation of the hadeeth in which he (SAW) was asked by the one who had a believing slave-girl about freeing her so he ordered that she be free and he called her a believer.[1] These are to be taken to mean, as I have explained to you, their entering faith and their acceptance and belief in what had been revealed from it at that time. And indeed it was revealed in stages, just as the Qur`aan was revealed in stages.

And the witness and evidence for what we say is the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (SAW). So from the Book of Allaah is His Saying,

"And whenever there comes down a chapter (of the Qur'aan) some of them (the hypocrites) say: 'Which of you has had his faith increased by it?' As for those that believe, it has increased their faith, and they rejoice." [9:124]

"The believers are those who, when Allaah is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His verses are recited unto them, they increase their faith, and they put their trust in their Lord." [8:2]

And other places in the Qur`aan similar to this.

Do you not see that Allaah, the Blessed and Exalted, did not reveal faith as one entity, just as he did not reveal the Qur`aan as one entity? So this is the proof from the Book - that if faith were complete with the affirmation of the shahaadah, then there would be no meaning to 'increasing faith' and no need to mention this.

As for the proof from the Sunnah and narrations then they are mutawaatir giving this meaning of increase in the tenants of faith. So in the following hadeeth four (articles of faith) are mentioned, in the next five, in the third nine, and in the fourth even more.

1. As for the hadeeth in which four are mentioned is the hadeeth of ibn Abbaas from the Prophet (SAW) that an envoy from Abd al-Qais came to him and said, "O Messenger of Allaah indeed we are tribe from Rabee'ah and between us and you are the unbelievers of Madr who prevent us from coming to you, so we are unable to come to you except in the Sanctified Month, so command us with something that we may perform and call those that we have left behind to." So he said, *"I command you with 4, and I forbid you from 4. Faith - then he explained this for them - to testify that none has the right to be worshipped except for Allaah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, to establish the prayer, to give the zakaah, and that you give a fifth of the war-booty. I forbid you from 4:…"*[2]

2. As for the hadeeth in which five are mentioned then it is the hadeeth of ibn Umar that he heard the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) saying, *"Islaam is built upon 5 (pillars): the testimony that none had the right to be worshipped except Allaah, and that Muhammad is*

[1] Indicating the hadeeth of Mu`aawiyah bin al-Hakm al-Silmee in which the Prophet (SAW) asked her, *"where is Allaah"*, reported by Muslim. See ibn Abee Shaybah no.84

[2] Reported by Muslim

the Messenger of Allaah, establishing the prayer, giving the zakaah, fasting in Ramadaan, and making pilgrimage to the House."[1]

3. As for the hadeeth in which nine are mentioned then it is the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah from the Prophet (SAW) that he said, *"indeed Islaam has landmarks and lights as does a road. From them are: that you believe in Allaah and do not commit shirk with him, establish the prayer, give the zakaah, fast in Ramadaan, make pilgrimage to the House, enjoin the good, forbid the evil, that you give the salaam to your family when you enter amongst them, and that you give salaam to the people as you pass by them. So the one who leaves any of this [then he has left a portion of Islaam, and the one who leaves all of them] has thrown Islaam behind his back.*"[2]

4. So the ignorant people thought that all these ahaadeeth were self contradicting due to the variation of numbers in them, but they are, and all praise is due to Allaah, by His Mercy far from contradiction. For their difference lies in the fact that the obligations of Faith were revealed in stages. So each time Allaah revealed a new obligation of faith, it increased the number (of tenants of faith) until they reached seventy tenants as occurs in the hadeeth that is established from him (SAW) that he said, *"faith is seventy and odd branches, it's most excellent is the testimony that none has the right to be worshipped except for Allah, and it's lowest is removing the harmful thing from the road."*[3]

So even if the number mentioned is greater they still do not contradict those ahaadeeth that came before it for those refer to the foundations of faith whereas these refer to the branches of faith.

So we believe, and Allaah knows best, that this is the last statement with which the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) depicted Faith because the number finished at this, and with it the characteristics of faith were completed as is testified to by the saying of Allaah**,**

"This day have I completed your religion for you, and perfected my favour upon you" (5:3).

5. Taariq bin Shihaab reported that, "the Jews said to Umar bin al-Khattaab, may Allaah have mercy upon him, 'indeed you recite a verse which had it been revealed amongst us we would have taken that day as an Eed,' and this verse was mentioned. So Umar said, 'indeed I know when it was revealed and on what day it was revealed. [It was revealed]

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[1] I say: it's isnaad is saheeh according to the conditions of Bukhaaree and Muslim and they reported it.

[2] A group report it, amongst them Haakim (1/21) who authenticated it to the condition of Bukhaaree and adh-Dhahabee agreed. And it is as they said, as I have researched in 'Silsilah al-Ahaadeeth as-Saheehah."

[3] It's isnaad is saheeh according to the conditions of Muslim and he reported it from Jareer from Suhail. And ibn Ijlaan followed him reporting from ibn Deenaar. See ibn Abee Shaybah (no. 66)

on the Day of Arafah and the Messenger (SAW) was standing on Arafah'". Sufyaan said, "I do not know whether he said 'on the Day of Jumu`ah' or not"[1]

6. From ibn Abee Ammaar who said, "ibn Abbaas recited this verse while there was a Jew in his presence. So the Jew said, 'if this verse had been revealed amongst us we would have taken that day as an Eed.' Ibn Abbaas replied, 'it was revealed on the day of Eed, the day of Jumu`ah, the day of Arafah.'"[2]

7. From Sha`bee who said, "it was revealed upon him (SAW) while he was standing on Arafah when shirk had vanished, and the sign posts of the *Jaahiliyyah* had been destroyed, and not a statute remained hanging in the house" [3]

8. So Allaah, Exalted is He, mentioned the completion of the religion in this verse, and it was revealed eighty one days before the death of the Prophet (SAW) as is reported from ibn Juraij.

So if faith was complete by mere affirmation while the Messenger (SAW) was in Mecca as stated by these people then there would be no meaning to completion (of the religion), for how can something be completed that is already complete and come in its final form?!

Abu Ubaid (the author) said: so if someone were to ask you, 'so what are these seventy branches branches?' It would be said to him: these have not been named for us collectively so that we may mention them, but knowledge does allow us to say that they are from the actions of obedience to Allaah and taqwa But even though they may not have been mentioned in any specific hadeeth, if you were to scrutinise the various narrations you would find them dispersed throughout them, did you not hear his saying concerning removing the harmful thing and that it was a branch of faith? And likewise his saying in another hadeeth, *"modesty is a branch of faith"*[4], and in a third, *"shame is branch of faith"*[5], and in a fourth, *"ascetism is from faith"*[6], and in a fifth, *"fulfilling contracts/promises is from faith"* [7] So all of these are from the branches of faith, and from

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[1] It's chain of narration is authentic according to the criteria of Bukhaaree and Muslim and they reported it. In the report of Muslim via the route of Abu Umais from Qais their occurs "it was revealed upon the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) on Arafah on the day of Jumu`ah."

[2] I.e. these three occasions fell on the same day [Trans.]

[3] It's chain of narration is mursal saheeh.

[4] Agreed upon from the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah. Consult ibn Abee Shaybah (no.66)

[5] Reported by al-Bazzaar and ibn Battah in 'al-Ibaanah' from Abu Sa'eed from the Messenger (SAW) with a sanad containing someone who condition is unknown.

[6] Reported by Abu Dawood, ibn Maajah, and others from Abu Umaamah al-Haarithee from the Messenger (SAW). Al-Haakim declared it saheeh and adh-Dhahabee agreed.

[7] Hasan hadeeth and al-Haakim declared it saheeh, and I have investigated it in 'Silsilah Ahaadeeth as-Saheehah'

them is the hadeeth of Ammaar, *"three (characteristics) are from faith: giving in charity freely, being just even at the expense of yourself, and spreading the salaam amongst the people"* [1]

Then there are the well-known ahaadeeth mentioning the completeness of faith wherein he (SAW) asked, *"which creation is the greatest with respect to faith?"* It was said: the Angels. Then it was said: us O Messenger of Allaah. So he said, *"rather a nation that will come after you"*[2] and he mentioned their characteristics. And from these is his saying, *"indeed the believer with the most complete faith is the best of them in character."*[3] And likewise his saying, *"a man will not have complete faith until he leaves lying in jest, and arguing even if he be in the truth."*[4] And a similar hadeeth is reported from Umar bin al-Khattaab and ibn Umar. And more clear than this is the hadeeth of the Prophet (SAW) pertaining to the intercession wherein he said, *"so the one whose heart contains a barley grains weight, and a wheat grains weight, and an atoms weight of faith will be removed from Hell."*[5] And from them is the hadeeth when he was asked about whispering, to which he replied, *"that is the pure and unadulterated faith."*[6] And likewise the hadeeth of Alee (AS), "indeed faith starts as a white spot in the heart, so each time faith increases, the white spot increases in magnitude." [7]

There are a great number of narrations concerning this whose mention will lengthen the discussion that serve to clarify to you the correlation of faith in the heart with actions, and

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[1] Reported as a hadeeth of the Messenger (SAW) and as a report from a Companion. And the strongest opinion is that it is a report from a Companion alongwith the fact that it's chain of narration contains someone who became confused. Consult the discussion and investigation concerning this in my footnotes to 'al-Kalim at-Tayyib' of ibn Taymiyyah (no.195), and hadeeth (no. 125) of 'Eemaan' of ibn Abee Shaybah. [It is in 'Saheeh Kalim at-Tayyib' under the chapter on 'salaam' as a narration of Ammaar bin Yaasir - Trans.]

[2] Reported by Hasan bin Urfah in his 'Juz' (2/90) from Umru bin Shu`ayb from his father from his grandfather from the Messenger, and it's chain of narration is da`eef. And al-Haakim reported it from the hadeeth of Umar and declared it saheeh and adh-Dhahabee refuted him. And all of this is explained in 'Silsilah Ahaadeeth as-Da`eefah'

[3] A saheeh hadeeth, and a group of scholars have authenticated it, and it is reported by ibn Abee Shaybah from the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah, Aa'ishah, and Hasan al-Basri, so consult our footnotes to it (no.'s 17, 20, 160)

[4] Reported by Ahmad (2/352-353, 364) from the hadeeth of Makhool from Abu Hurayrah from the Messenger (SAW). And Makhool did not hear from Abu Hurayrah (RA).

[5] Agreed upon from the hadeeth of Anas (RA) and it is reported by ibn Abee Shaybah (no. 35)

[6] Reported by Muslim and others from the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah, and it is investigated in 'Silsilah Ahaadeeth as-Saheehah'

[7] And it is a report of Alee (RA) narrated by ibn Abee Shaybah (no.8) and it's chain of narration is munqati' as I have explained there.

all of them, or most of them, stress that righteous actions are from faith.[1] So how is it possible to oppose these by way of falsification or rejection?!

And from those things that testify to the truth of it's correlation with actions is the saying of Allaah,

"The believers are only those whose hearts tremble when Allaah is mentioned, and when His verses are recited they increase them in faith, and upon their Lord they put their trust" (6:2) to his saying, "they are in truth the believers." (6:3) [2]

So Allaah did not give faith a reality except with action upon these conditions (mentioned in the verse). And the one who thinks that merely a saying makes one a true and complete believer even if there is no action (accompanying the saying) is one who is opposing the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah.

And from those things that clarify the differing levels of faith in the heart is His saying**,**

"O you who believe! When the believing women come to you as fugitives, test them. Allaah Knows best their faith, then if you ascertain that they are true believers." (60:10)

Do you not see that here there is a level less than the complete level [in that Allaah has addressed the believers to test other believers] And likewise His saying,

"O you who believe! Believe in Allaah and His Messenger." (4:136)

So if this was not a command to increase in ones faith then there would be no meaning in ordering the believers to believe in Allaah and His Messenger. Then He also says,

"Alif Laam Meem. Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: 'we believe' and will not be tested? And We tested those who were before them. And Allaah will certainly make it known (the truth of) those who are true, and will certainly make it known (the falsehood of) those who are liars." (29:1-3)

"Of mankind there are some who say: 'we believe in Allaah' but if they are made to suffer for the sake of Allaah they consider the trial of mankind as Allaah's Punishment." (29:10)

"And that Allaah may test (or purify) the believers (from sins) and destroy the disbelievers." (3:141)

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[1] I say: you will see a good number of them in the book of ibn Abee Shaybah.

[2] The complete verse is **"those who establish the prayer, and spend of that which We have provided them. They are in truth the beleivers."**

So do you not see Allaah trying the believers to attest their saying with action and not being Pleased with their merely affirming (the *shahaadah*) without accompanying it with action? So what is there to be followed after the Book of Allaah, the Sunnah of His Messenger (SAW), and the guidance of the Salaf after him - those who are our role-models and Imaams?!

So what have the scholars stated about this matter which we have declared to be the Sunnah? It is none other than that we have stated in this book of ours - that faith consists of intention, saying and action together, and that it has levels some above others, and that it's first and highest level is the testification with the tongue as the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) said in the hadeeth in which he made faith to have seventy and odd branches. So if someone were to articulate this *shahaadah* and accept that which has come from Allaah, the appellation of faith becomes incumbent upon him due to his entering it, and as he increases in obedience and *taqwa* to Allaah - his faith increases.